

# CARU NEWS

For Immediate Release

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## **GATORADE MAKER WORKS WITH CARU TO MODIFY ADVERTISEMENTS DIRECTED TO CHILDREN**

*New York, NY – August 31, 2005* – The Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU) of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. is pleased to announce that **Stokely-Van Camp, Inc.** (Stokely) has agreed to modify television and print advertising for its **Gatorade® Thirst Quencher** (Gatorade) so that children understand under what circumstances the drink “works” and to assure that the claims made are supported by the company’s substantiation. The television advertising came to CARU’s attention through routine monitoring and the print ad was brought to CARU’s attention through a consumer complaint.

The commercial, entitled “Just Wrong,” and aired on Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network during children’s programming, depicts professional athletes drinking beverages such as cappuccino, punch, or tomato juice, after which an announcer states “When the pros aren’t drinking Gatorade, it just seems wrong” and finally, “The pros drink Gatorade for the same reason you do. It works.”

The full-page print commercial appeared in *Sports Illustrated for Kids* and featured a professional soccer player, in her soccer outfit, drinking from a large can of tomato juice. “PENALTY” is written across the lower middle section of the ad in large white letters. Below that, in smaller white letters are the words “It just seems wrong when the pros aren’t drinking Gatorade. They drink Gatorade for the same reason you do. It works.”

CARU found that the commercial represented to children that drinking Gatorade could, at any time and under any circumstances, make them better athletes and enhance their status among other children. CARU also found that the commercial and print advertisement represented that it is good to drink Gatorade whenever one is thirsty, and that drinking Gatorade is better than drinking tomato juice in all circumstances.

CARU’s *Guidelines* are concerned with the special susceptibilities and vulnerabilities of children and specifically state, “The advertising presentation should not mislead children about benefits from use of the product. Such benefits may include...the acquisition of strength...” They also state, “comparative claims should be presented in ways that children understand clearly.”

Stokely worked cooperatively with CARU on this matter. The company stated, "while we are not in total agreement with CARU's interpretation of the humorous 'Just Wrong' advertising, in support of the self-regulatory process we will take CARU's concerns under advisement as we develop future advertisements which appear in children's media."

CARU's inquiry was conducted under NAD/CARU/NARB Procedures for Voluntary Self-Regulation of National Advertising and resolved within 60 business days. Details of the inquiry, CARU's decision and the advertiser's response will be included in the next NAD/CARU Case Report. Members of the press and general public who wish to see a copy of the decision now should email CARU at [lbean@narc.bbb.org](mailto:lbean@narc.bbb.org)

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The National Advertising Review Council (NARC) was formed in 1971 by the Association of National Advertisers, Inc. (ANA), the American Association of Advertising Agencies, Inc. (AAAA), the American Advertising Federation, Inc. (AAF), and the Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc. (CBBB). Its purpose is to foster truth and accuracy in national advertising through voluntary self-regulation. NARC is the body that establishes the policies and procedures for the CBBB's National Advertising Division (NAD), the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU), and the National Advertising Review Board (NARB).

NAD and CARU are the investigative arms of the advertising industry's voluntary self-regulation program. Their casework results from competitive challenges from other advertisers, and also from self-monitoring traditional and new media, including the Internet. The National Advertising Review Board (NARB), the appeals body, is a peer group from which ad-hoc panels are selected to adjudicate those cases that are not resolved at the NAD/CARU level. This unique, self-regulatory system is funded entirely by the business community; CARU is financed by the children's advertising industry, while NAD/NARB's sole source of funding is derived from membership fees paid to the Council of Better Business Bureaus.